



6.0 LAND USE

Strategy Direction

Increase residential intensity, create neighbourhood units, intensify the downtown, and provide adequate land for commercial and industrial growth.

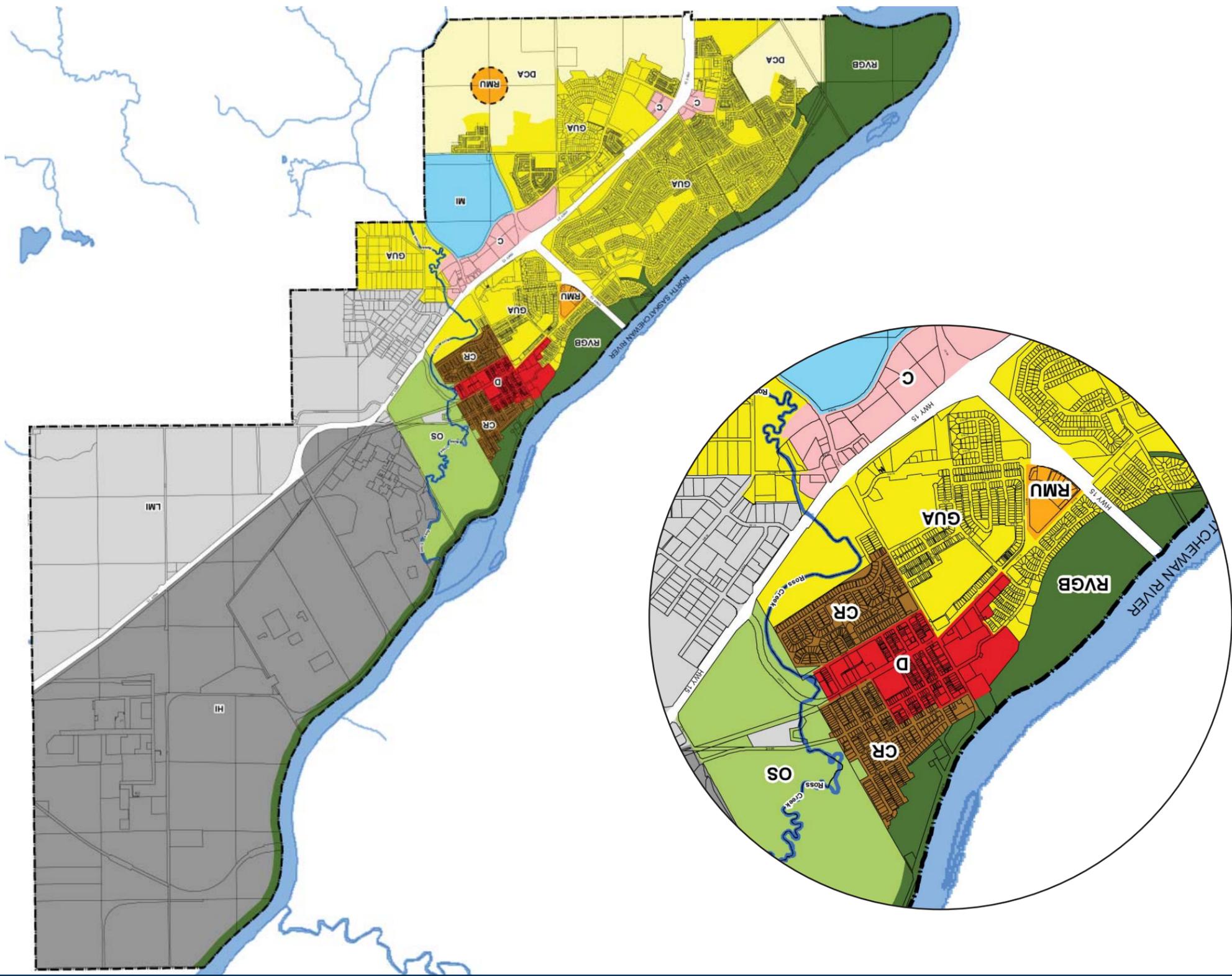
Context

The Future Land Use Plan (Map 3) identifies the overall growth management strategy for the City of Fort Saskatchewan. Through a set of land use designations and supporting policies, the Plan provides a guide for future decisions about land use and density. Map 3 identifies the locations for all land use designations listed below, and described in detail in Section 6.3.

Land Use Designations:

- Downtown (D)
- General Urban Area (GUA)
- Core Residential (CR)
- Residential Mixed Use Centre (RMU)
- Commercial (C)
- Major Institutional (MI)
- Heavy Industrial (HI)
- Light and Medium Industrial (LMI)
- Developing Community Area (DCA)
- Open Space (OS)
- River Valley Green Belt (RVGB)

Map 3 - Future Land Use Plan



- Legend**
- River Valley Green Belt (RVGB)
 - Open Space (OS)
 - Major Institutional (MI)
 - Heavy Industrial (HI)
 - Light and Medium Industrial (LMI)
 - Core Residential (CR)
 - General Urban Area (GUA)
 - Developing Community (DCA)
 - Residential Mixed Use Centre (RMU)
 - Downtown (D)
 - Commercial (C)
 - Ross Creek

0 250 500 1,000
Meters



**CITY OF FORT SASKATCHEWAN
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
MAP 3**

Adopted September 14, 2010



6.1 Downtown

The Municipal Development Plan recognizes the Downtown area as the focal point for commerce and community interaction in the City. Historically, the Downtown has provided these functions. However, in recent years, there has been some stagnation of new commercial development in the Downtown core, as a number of businesses have chosen to locate in the commercial area on the south side of Highway 15/21. Over the last few years, the City has undertaken a number of visioning and consultation exercises in an attempt to revitalize the Downtown area. This work culminated in 2009 with the completion of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan (DARP) and Design Guidelines. The intent of the DARP is: “To provide direction to ensure that Downtown Fort Saskatchewan is the vibrant heart of the community – the location of choice for business and people, that provides a unique range of residential, commercial, entertainment, cultural, and recreational opportunities, a place where people choose to live, work, and play.”

This MDP reinforces the direction that was set in the DARP, providing the policy framework to guide future development in the Downtown, and setting the stage for the implementation of the DARP, so that the Downtown will once again function as the vibrant heart of the City, and the focal point for new development and community-wide activities.

For the Downtown, the City’s policies are as follows:

- 6.1.1 Implement the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan and Design Guidelines document, which sets the main policy direction for the development of the Downtown, and support the ongoing initiatives identified in this Plan.
- 6.1.2 Promote the Downtown as the centre for commerce and civic life in Fort Saskatchewan.
- 6.1.3 Establish the Downtown as the primary location within the City for new office developments, to augment the commercial land base.
- 6.1.4 Establish the Downtown as the City’s most prominent walkable, urban neighbourhood, providing a unique range of residential, commercial, entertainment, cultural, and recreational opportunities.
- 6.1.5 Encourage initiatives in the Downtown area that support the principles and policies of the City of Fort Saskatchewan Community Sustainability Plan.
- 6.1.6 Encourage public realm investments in the Downtown, recognizing the role that this area plays as a focal point for the community.



6.2 General Urban Area

The General Urban Area consists of the established residential neighbourhoods in Fort Saskatchewan. While the housing stock predominantly consists of single detached homes, there are a growing proportion of other choices, such as duplexes, townhouses, and apartments. The General Urban Area designation permits the development of a full range of housing types to meet the needs of all residents. In addition, the General Urban Area designation permits conveniently located schools, community facilities, places of worship, parks, and neighbourhood commercial uses. This designation facilitates the development of complete neighbourhood units, with a full range of housing options and supporting uses available within each neighbourhood unit.

For the General Urban Area, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.2.1 Reinforce the development of complete neighbourhood units by encouraging a range of dwelling unit types and densities, along with supporting services, in each residential neighbourhood within the City.
- 6.2.2 Within each neighbourhood encourage a mix of dwelling unit types, schools, places of worship, recreational opportunities, and neighbourhood commercial uses.
- 6.2.3 Ensure that all new commercial uses have an orientation towards the surrounding neighbourhood, with emphasis on access by pedestrians, cyclists, and transit. These uses should be of a size and scale that is consistent with the surrounding residential uses.
- 6.2.4 Encourage commercial and professional uses oriented towards local neighbourhood markets to locate within the General Urban Area.
- 6.2.5 Consider proposals for sensitive residential infill redevelopment projects that contribute to the livability of existing neighbourhoods.

6.3 Core Residential

The Core Residential designation applies to predominantly residential neighbourhoods that are located directly adjacent to the Downtown. This designation is intended to reinforce the residential character of this area, while providing opportunities for sensitive residential infill redevelopment, given the proximity of this area to the Downtown.

For the Core Residential designation, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.3.1 Recognize the predominantly residential character of the Core Residential area and support projects that reinforce this character. Supported uses will include residential uses, neighbourhood parks, and places of worship.
- 6.3.2 Support proposals for sensitive residential infill redevelopment projects, recognizing the proximity of this area to the Downtown. Carriage homes (i.e. units above detached garages), duplexes, townhouses (i.e. attached row housing), and low-rise multiple unit buildings may be considered, provided that projects are sensitive to existing surrounding uses.
- 6.3.3 Review Land Use Bylaw regulations for the Core Residential Area, with special consideration for residential intensification opportunities.

6.4 Developing Community Area

The Developing Community designation is intended for future development areas in both Southfort and Westpark. Within these areas Fort Saskatchewan currently anticipates significant suburban expansion, based on the direction that was established by the Southfort ASP and the Westpark ASP, both adopted in 2003. Upon full build-out of these areas, the City will have essentially developed its full residential land base, and future residential development would require infill projects or annexation of additional lands outside of the current City boundary, beyond the horizon of this MDP.

Since the completion of the Southfort and Westpark ASPs, the Capital Region Board (CRB) has established residential density targets of 25 to 30 units per net hectare for Fort Saskatchewan. However, the existing Southfort and Westpark ASPs achieve residential densities that have met or exceed the CRB targets in the recent past. Administration will work with the development industry to continue to implement the existing plans with the goal of meeting CRB objectives. In support of the CRB density targets, the City supports efforts to amend the Southfort and Westpark ASPs, with the goals of: intensifying the areas while providing high quality development; encouraging the development of more complete neighbourhoods; providing a variety of housing types within each neighbourhood; promoting a walkable suburb, where residents have easy access to local amenities such as parks, schools, and neighbourhood commercial uses; and, increasing the capacity of these lands to accommodate future residential development within the current City boundary.

For the Developing Community Area designation, Council's policies are as follows:

- 6.4.1 Encourage amendments to the Southfort and Westpark ASPs that support the Capital Region Board density targets for Fort Saskatchewan and that provide high quality residential neighbourhoods with a variety of housing types and access to numerous local amenities.
- 6.4.2 In support of the Capital Region Board density targets, intensify the Southfort and Westpark areas by increasing the proportion of multiple family residential developments, and by discouraging vehicle-oriented commercial developments.
- 6.4.3 Initiate negotiations with landowners to facilitate the required amendments to the Southfort and Westpark ASPs in support of the Capital Region Board density targets for Fort Saskatchewan.
- 6.4.4 Update infrastructure master plans to ensure the ability to support planned increases in density within Southfort and Westpark.
- 6.4.5 Require that new greenfield development follows an efficient and logical pattern of phasing.
- 6.4.6 Discourage Land Use Bylaw amendments that would result in leapfrog development.
- 6.4.7 Reinforce the development of complete neighbourhood units by encouraging a range of dwelling unit types and densities, along with supporting services, in each residential neighbourhood within the Developing Community Area.
- 6.4.8 Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure that new developments incorporate uses that contribute to neighbourhood completeness and diversity. Such uses may include a mix of dwelling unit types, schools, places of worship, recreational opportunities, and



neighbourhood commercial uses.

- 6.4.9 Ensure that all new commercial uses have an orientation towards the surrounding neighbourhood, with emphasis on access by pedestrians, cyclists, and transit. These uses should be of a size and scale that is consistent with the surrounding residential uses.
- 6.4.10 Encourage commercial and professional uses oriented towards local neighbourhood markets to locate within the Developing Community Area, and consider residential land uses as part of these developments.

6.5 Residential Mixed Use Centre

Residential Mixed Use Centres are intended to provide focal points for higher intensity residential and commercial uses, outside the Downtown area. While the General Urban Area designation permits a wide variety of residential uses and neighbourhood commercial uses, Residential Mixed Uses areas are specifically designated for higher density residential developments. Within this designation, the City envisions residential development as the main underlying use; however, mixed use buildings, with commercial uses on the ground floor, are encouraged, and there may also be opportunities for a limited number of commercial-only buildings (e.g. for professional services).

For the Residential Mixed Use Centre designation, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.5.1 Encourage the development of neighbourhood-oriented residential and commercial buildings, or mixed-use buildings with commercial uses on the ground floor.
- 6.5.2 Ensure that new development is oriented to the street, with active frontages and parking to be located below, behind, or to the side of buildings.
- 6.5.3 Consider opportunities to reduce parking requirements, similar to the Land Use Bylaw's Downtown Parking Overlay, if it can be demonstrated that the lack of parking will support alternative modes of transportation and not present a source of inconvenience to the surrounding area.
- 6.5.4 Encourage the development of Residential Mixed Use areas as major transit nodes within the City.
- 6.5.5 Initiate the completion of an Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) for the hospital site and the remainder of the Residential Mixed Use Centre at the corner of 99 Ave and 95 Street.
- 6.5.6 Support amendments to the Southfort Area Structure Plan (ASP) to facilitate the development of higher density residential and commercial uses in the location generally identified as a Residential Mixed Use Centre in the MDP Future Land Use Plan (Map 2).
- 6.5.7 Consider additional areas for the Residential Mixed Use Centre designation as market demand warrants it.

6.6 Commercial

Through the past number of years, the commercial area on the south side of Highway 15/21 has established itself as the major destination for large format retailers, as well as a number of smaller businesses. There are also highway-oriented commercial sites at the intersection of Westpark/Southfort Boulevards and Highway 21. All of these sites have typically developed at low intensity, with plenty of surface parking, and there are significant opportunities for future intensification. The City will concentrate future highway commercial development in these areas, while ensuring that General Urban Area lands are preserved for commercial development that has a stronger orientation to surrounding neighbourhoods and residential uses.

For the Commercial designation, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.6.1 Direct all highway commercial and vehicle-oriented commercial uses to those areas designated as Commercial.
- 6.6.2 Explore future infill opportunities to intensify low-density, vehicle-oriented commercial sites.
- 6.6.3 Discourage amendments to Area Structure Plans or the Land Use Bylaw to create new vehicle-oriented commercial uses outside of those areas included within the Commercial designation.
- 6.6.4 Encourage a high quality of building design in commercial areas, with buildings that are adaptable to different users over time.
- 6.6.5 Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure that the appropriate range of commercial uses is available in each of the existing commercial Land Use Districts.



6.7 Major Institutional

The City's Major Institutional lands are recognized as key employment nodes and economic drivers in Fort Saskatchewan. These facilities include both the Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre and the new Fort Saskatchewan Community Hospital.

For the Major Institutional designation, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.7.1 Continue to work proactively with senior levels of government to support the facilities located on the City's Major Institutional lands.
- 6.7.2 Preserve the Major Institutional land base.
- 6.7.3 Ensure the compatibility of surrounding land uses with the Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre and the Fort Saskatchewan Community Hospital.

6.8 Industrial

The City's industrial land base is a key element of Fort Saskatchewan's overall character and economy, dating back to the establishment of the Sherritt plant in the early 1950s. Today, Fort Saskatchewan is a key partner in the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association (AIHA), which was formed in 1998. The AIHA is a non-profit cooperative group of five municipalities that are dedicated toward sustainable eco-industrial development. The Heartland includes portions of the City of Fort Saskatchewan, Strathcona County, Sturgeon County, and Lamont County. In 2010, the City of Edmonton became the fifth official municipal partner. The area is one of Canada's largest processing centres for petroleum, petrochemicals and chemicals, and it provides an important processing link from the Athabasca Oil Sands to market destinations in North America and overseas. The AIHA's mandate is to help position the Heartland Region as a global leader in processing, manufacturing, and eco-industrial development.

Since 1999, the AIHA has initiated a number of community-based planning initiatives to complement the overall economic development goals for the Heartland. Foremost among these is the completion of the four complementary Industrial Heartland Area Structure Plans (ASPs) from 1998 to 2001, for lands within Strathcona County, Sturgeon County, Lamont County, and the City of Fort Saskatchewan. Through the ASP process, the AIHA identified the potential for world-scale petrochemical industry to be attracted to the area based on the principles of eco-industrial development. An eco-industrial park or cluster is generally characterized by closely cooperating industrial, manufacturing and services businesses that work together to improve their environmental and economic performance by reducing waste and increasing resource efficiency. Over the past decade, the AIHA has worked to advance the concept of eco-industrial development in the Industrial Heartland, and its plans are currently articulated in an Eco-Industrial Master Plan Strategy for the Industrial Heartland.

Fort Saskatchewan's heavy industrial land base is located on the north side of Highway 15, to the northeast of the Downtown. On the south side of Highway 15, Fort Saskatchewan has a significant inventory of Light and Medium Industrial lands to support existing and emerging local and regional industries in Fort Saskatchewan and the Alberta Industrial Heartland. To augment this inventory, the City is currently completing the Josephburg Road North Industrial Area Structure Plan to provide land for light and medium industrial activities that could support the activities associated with heavy industry.



General Policies for all Industrial Areas

For both the Heavy Industrial and the Light and Medium Industrial designations, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.8.1 Implement the Industrial Heartland Area Structure Plan (ASP) and the Josephburg Road North Industrial ASP, which set the main policy direction for the development of industrial areas.
- 6.8.2 Continue to participate as a partner in Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association and support efforts to promote and facilitate the orderly development of one of the largest petrochemical clusters in North America.
- 6.8.3 Encourage the utilization of eco-industrial planning principles, seeking enhanced environmental and economic performance through collaboration in managing environmental and resource issues, including energy, water, and materials, as outlined in the Industrial Heartland ASP and the Eco-Industrial Master Plan Strategy.
- 6.8.4 Require, through provisions of the Land Use Bylaw and other municipal bylaws, quality development to be maintained through the application of standards for siting and design of buildings, landscaping, screening of storage and parking areas, and signage.
- 6.8.5 Co-ordinate with the Province to identify the location of any aggregate resources, to assist in making informed land use planning decisions.
- 6.8.6 Consult with the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board regarding any subdivision and/ or development applications that will result in additional permanent overnight accommodation or public facility within the 1.5 km setback of sour gas facilities as per Section 10 of the Subdivision and Development Regulation, as amended.
- 6.8.7 Permit interim agricultural uses that will not preclude the future use of the land for Industrial uses.
- 6.8.8 Ensure that developments mitigate visual impacts from public roads.
- 6.8.9 Ensure the remediation of any brownfield sites upon decommissioning of industrial uses, to avoid creating any orphaned industrial sites.

Heavy Industrial

Within its portion of the Industrial Heartland, the City will continue to provide opportunities for Heavy Industrial development, consistent with the Industrial Heartland Area Structure Plan (ASP). The purpose of the Heavy Industrial designation is to provide an adequate land base for Heavy Industrial uses within Fort Saskatchewan, in a location that has little or no conflict with surrounding uses. Through its partnerships in the AIHA, the City will continue to support the expansion of the petrochemical sector, while working to reduce overall environmental impacts and achieve economic benefits through synergistic, eco-industrial development.

For the Heavy Industrial designation, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.8.10 Encourage active reinvestment in Heavy Industrial development and support efforts to intensify underutilized land within the Heavy Industrial area.
- 6.8.11 Ensure that Heavy Industrial uses meet current Industrial Risk standards and guidelines.
- 6.8.12 Ensure that risk assessments are required as integral components of the development review process for Heavy Industrial uses, as defined in the Growth Plan.
- 6.8.13 Through a risk management approach, provide adequate separation distances between heavy industrial uses or oil and gas facilities and incompatible uses.
- 6.8.14 Through the development review process, ensure the provision of adequate environmental setbacks from the North Saskatchewan River.

Light and Medium Industrial

Fort Saskatchewan has a significant inventory of Light and Medium Industrial lands to support existing and emerging local and regional industries in Fort Saskatchewan and the Alberta's Industrial Heartland. To augment this inventory, the City is currently completing the Josephburg Road North Industrial Area Structure Plan to provide land for light and medium industrial activities that could support the activities associated with heavy industry. Throughout the Light and Medium Industrial land base, the City will continue to provide opportunities for Light and Medium Industrial development, consistent with the Industrial Heartland Area Structure Plan (ASP).

For the Light and Medium Industrial designation, the City's policies are as follows:

- 6.8.15 Complete and implement the Josephburg Road North Industrial Area Structure Plan (ASP).
- 6.8.16 Ensure compatibility between the Light and Medium Industrial designation and surrounding urban development by directing only Light Industrial uses to those lands within proximity of the General Urban Area.
- 6.8.17 Proactively work to ensure a supply of fully serviced Light and Medium Industrial lands.
- 6.8.18 Ensure that Light and Medium Industrial uses meet current Industrial Risk standards and guidelines.
- 6.8.19 Use a risk management approach based on principles of: risk reduction at the source; risk reductions through land use controls and prescribed mitigation measures; emergency preparedness; emergency response; and, risk communication.



6.9 Open Space

The Open Space designation applies to those lands located between the Downtown and Core Residential areas, and the Heavy Industrial area. This space is intended to protect Ross Creek and provide a separation between Heavy Industrial uses and the City's urban areas.

For the Open Space designation, Council's policies are as follows:

- 6.9.1 Maintain an open space area between the City's urban areas and Heavy Industrial lands, as indicated on the Future Land Use Plan (Map 2).
- 6.9.2 Do not permit any new industrial development within the Open Space area.

6.10 River Valley Greenbelt

The River Valley Greenbelt designation applies to those lands directly adjacent to the North Saskatchewan River. The river is a very important feature of the City aesthetically, historically, ecologically, and culturally. Within the Greenbelt area, the City aims to maintain high quality habitat with safe public access and recreational opportunities. Supporting these aims, a number of relevant plans are in place. These include: A Plan of Action for the Capital Region River Valley Park (2007), prepared for the River Valley Alliance; the City of Fort Saskatchewan River Valley Recreational Study Development Master Plan Report (1997); the River's Edge Recreation Area Development Master Plan Update (2006); and, the West River's Edge Recreation Area Access and Servicing Study Final Report (2007).

In areas adjacent to the City's Industrial land base, the River Valley Greenbelt designation identifies a conceptual area to be protected as a natural area. Through further study, the City will identify appropriate environmental setbacks from the river's edge. In the interim, as development applications occur on adjacent lands, environmental considerations will be reviewed to ensure the provision of adequate setbacks from the river's edge.

For the River Valley Greenbelt designation, Council's policies are as follows:

- 6.10.1 Maintain the River Valley Greenbelt as a natural space and recreation area for the enjoyment of all citizens.
- 6.10.2 Work with neighbouring jurisdictions to provide linkages to regional river valley trail networks.
- 6.10.3 Provide opportunities for safe public access to the river.
- 6.10.4 Implement the directions set in the Plan of Action for the Capital Region River Valley Park (2007); the City of Fort Saskatchewan River Valley Recreational Study Development Master Plan Report (1997); the River's Edge Recreation Area Development Master Plan Update (2006); and, the West River's Edge Recreation Area Access and Servicing Study Final Report (2007).
- 6.10.5 Maintain high quality riverfront habitat adjacent to the Heavy Industrial land base, ensuring the implementation of appropriate environmental setbacks between new industrial development and the river's edge.